



Iowa 21st Century Community Learning Center Report October 2013

Allamakee County's 21st Century Community Learning Centers address student needs with programs to (1) close the achievement gaps in math/reading so all students are proficient, (2) help students to value themselves and be engaged and supported in their communities, and (3) increase parents' engagement in education and children's daily lives.

Both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected to assess and strengthen the program.

Section 1: Gathering of Data

1. Qualitative information related to several aspects of the before/after school program was gathered
 - a. through interviews with students, school administrators, CCLC site coordinators, and community adults during the spring semester of the 2012-13 school year,
 - b. through examination of staff monthly reports, site coordinator monthly progress reports, and agendas and minutes of meetings, including advisory board meetings, staff meetings, leadership committee meetings, and partnership meetings from July 2012 to the present.
2. Jan Mitchell, CC Program Reviewer, an outsider to the school districts, composed the questions and conducted the interviews with school administrators and site coordinators. Kathy Hay, a former educator in the Allamakee Community School District, interviewed the students and community adults.
3. This report includes three sections: (1) Gathering of Data, (2) Findings, and (3) Recommendations. Separate files of related documents provide interview transcripts and a chart of excerpts from monthly reports relevant to this report.

Section 2: Findings

- 1. CCLC programming for K-8 students in Postville and students in Junior and Senior High Schools in the Allamakee Community School District [ACSD] have multiple opportunities for Hands-On Experiential Learning.**

Monthly reports written by site coordinators include information about student activity clubs for every age group ranging from Art in Shapes Club to Clever Construction Club at Postville, Automotive Club to Web Design Club for ACSD Junior High Students, Crocheting Club to STEM Club at the High School. 42 specific clubs were mentioned. As students work on club projects, they problem-solve, create solutions, and learn from processes that include reading for information, mathematical calculations, and collaborative communication.

Experiential learning also occurred in Advantage Trips to the Mississippi River, a Planetarium, and other locations. Postville used "Pirate Bucks" for student motivation and to build financial skills.

When interviewed, 90% of the Junior High and Senior High students who attend the before/after school program answered "Yes" to the question: "Does the before/after school program help you learn new things that are not part of your schoolwork?"

2. CCLC programming for K-8 students in Postville and students in Junior and Senior High Schools in the Allamakee Community School District [ACSD] provides adult/youth interactions.

All age groups are exposed to programming which involves homework tutoring by adults, community members, or education students from Luther College. According to monthly reports, Postville has “homework helpers” as well as adult translators to work with ESL students in the before/after school program. ACSD also has adults working with the students. At the Junior High, tutors in math, reading, history, and science were available weekly. At the Senior High, the focus was math tutoring.

Many of the clubs are led by community members—adults with special interests and expertise—who interact with the young people as they help them to learn to crochet, to take good photographs, to learn Spanish or French, to read recipes and measure ingredients, and other skills.

Advisory Boards for each before/after school program center were planned to include both students and parents, according to staff meeting minutes.

3. Allamakee County’s CCLC programs have made some effort to engage families to take interest their children’s education and daily lives.

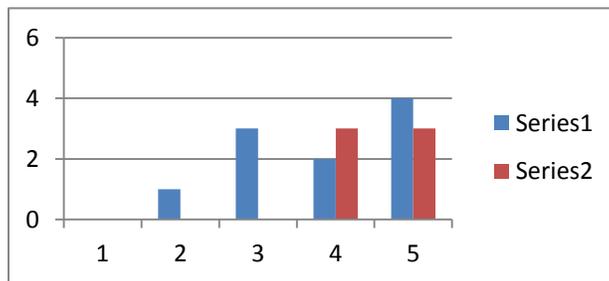
Members of the Postville Advisory Board discussed how to help build family communication skills, according to the minutes from a meeting held in August 2012. Postville was a training site two months later for a session led by Mayo Hart, an ESL trainer for ELL parents and partners. According to the meeting summary, information shared included parent education, strategies to overcome cultural differences, and the need to be inclusive.

4. Interviews with students, community adults, CCLC site coordinators, and school administrators give mixed perceptions about students’ relationship to school.

16 students in Junior High or Senior High were shown these 5 statements and asked, “Which of the following is true most of the time?”

1. I don’t really care much about school
2. I know I should do better in my schoolwork
3. I like the idea of getting help with my homework
4. I am working harder at getting my schoolwork done
5. My grades are starting to improve because I am doing better in school

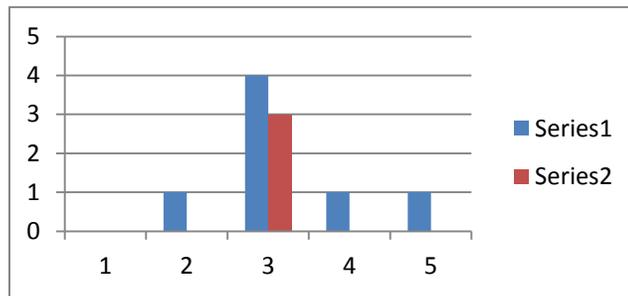
The responses are below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number. The bars in blue represent the responses from students who attend CCLC programming. Those in red are student responders who do not attend CCLC programming.



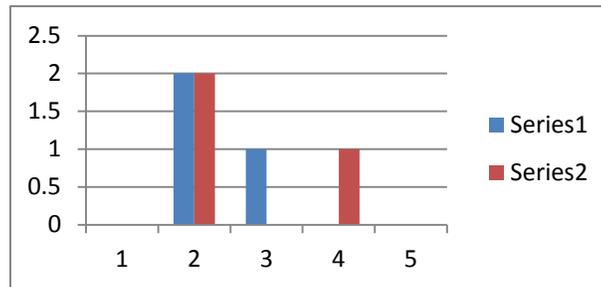
16 adults from the community were shown these 5 statements and asked, “Based on your observations of students, which of these levels would be true about more students than the other levels?” Some of the adults interviewed did not answer the question.

1. The students don’t really care much about school.
2. The students know they should do better academically.
3. The students like the idea of getting help with school work.
4. The students are working hard to get schoolwork done.
5. The students are learning and their grades are starting to improve because they are doing well in school.

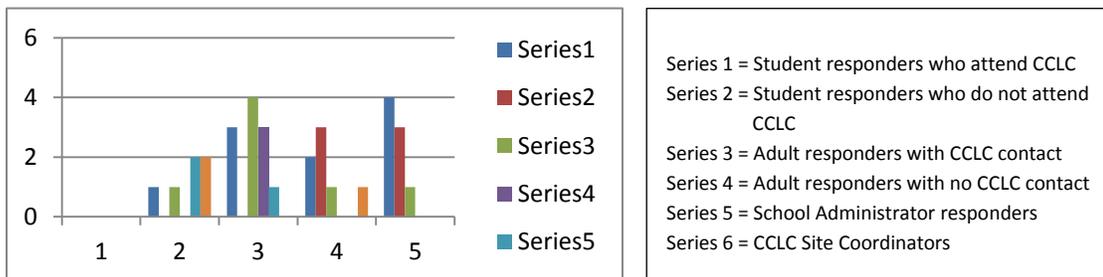
The adult responses are below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number. The bars in blue represent the responses from adults who have contact with CCLC programming. Those in red are adult responders with no CCLC contact.



Interviews with 3 school administrators and 3 CCLC site-coordinators yielded more answers to the same 5 statements above. They also were asked, “Based on your observations of students, which of these levels would be true about more students than the other levels?” Their responses are below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number. The bars in blue represent the responses from the school administrators. Those in red are CCLC site coordinators.



A composite of all interview responses about students’ relationship to school is shown below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number.

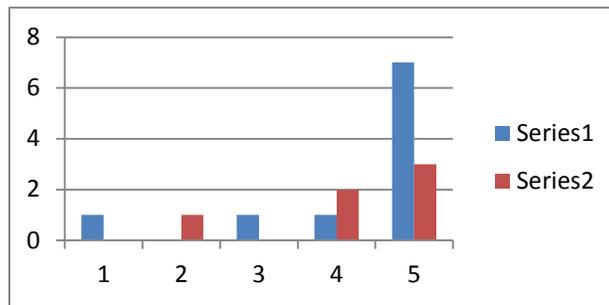


5. Interviews with students, community adults, CCLC site coordinators, and school administrators give perceptions about students’ motivation related to involvement in activities. Responses from both the students and community adults interviewed strongly favor the belief that students are in some school or church activity and that involvement helps students’ esteem.

16 students in Junior High or Senior High were shown these 5 statements and asked, “Which of the following is true most of the time?”

1. My life is kind of boring. I don’t have much going on.
2. I might like to do more things.
3. I want to get into some clubs or groups that do things.
4. I am in some school or church activities—sports, clubs, groups.
5. I am active in at least one activity or club that makes me feel good about myself.

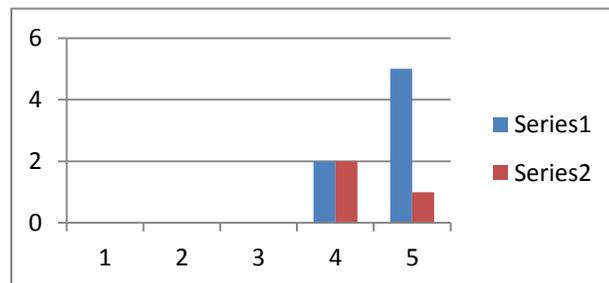
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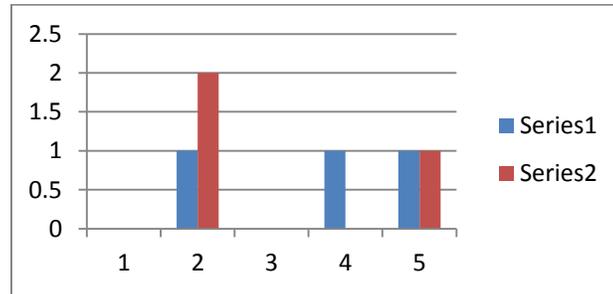
16 adults from the community were shown these 5 statements and asked, “Based on your observations of students, which of these levels would be true about more students than the other levels?” Some of the adults interviewed did not answer the question.

1. Students see life as kind of boring. They don’t have much going on.
2. Students might like to do more things but don’t make the effort.
3. Students want to get into some clubs or groups with other teens.
4. Students are in some school or church activities—sports, clubs, groups.
5. Students gain skills and esteem from their active involvement in at least one activity or club.

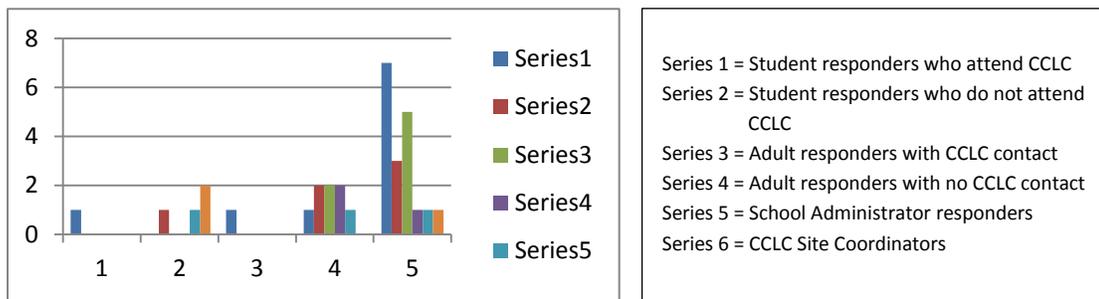
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A composite of all interview responses about students’ motivation related to involvement in activities is shown below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number.

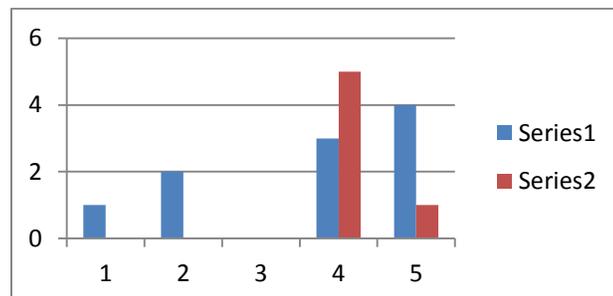


6. Interviews with students, community adults, CCLC site coordinators, and school administrators give perceptions about families’ involvement in their children’s education.

16 students in Junior High or Senior High were shown these 5 statements and asked, “Which of the following is true most of the time?”

1. My family doesn’t pay much attention to what I’m doing.
2. I think about my family doing school things with me.
3. My parents have talked about doing some family things at school.
4. My parents come to events at school like parent conferences and family nights.
5. I feel that my parents are interested in my learning because they are involved in family events at the school.

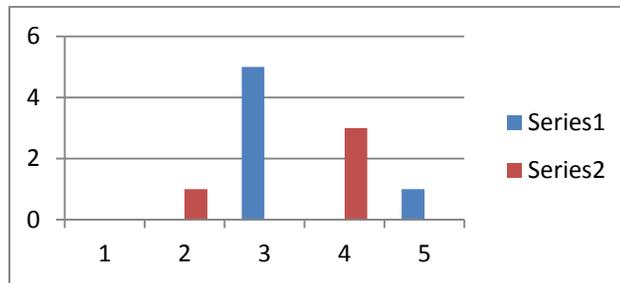
The responses are below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number. The bars in blue represent the responses from students who attend CCLC programming. Those in red are student responders who do not attend CCLC programming.



16 adults from the community were shown these 5 statements and asked, “Based on your observations of students, which of these levels would be true about more students and their families than the other levels?” Some of the adults interviewed did not answer the question.

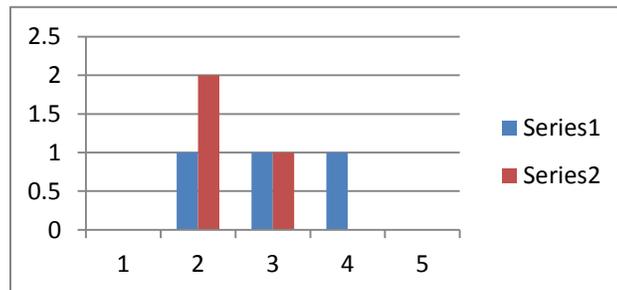
1. The families don’t pay much attention to what the student does.
2. Some families think it would be nice to do more with the school but don’t and/or students notice that their parents don’t show interest in what happens at school.
3. The families talk about doing some family things at school with little follow-through.
4. Most parents come to events at school like parent conferences and family nights.
5. Students know that their parents are interested in their learning because they are involved in family events at the school.

The adult responses are below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number. The bars in blue represent the responses from adults who have contact with CCLC programming. Those in red are adult responders with no CCLC contact.

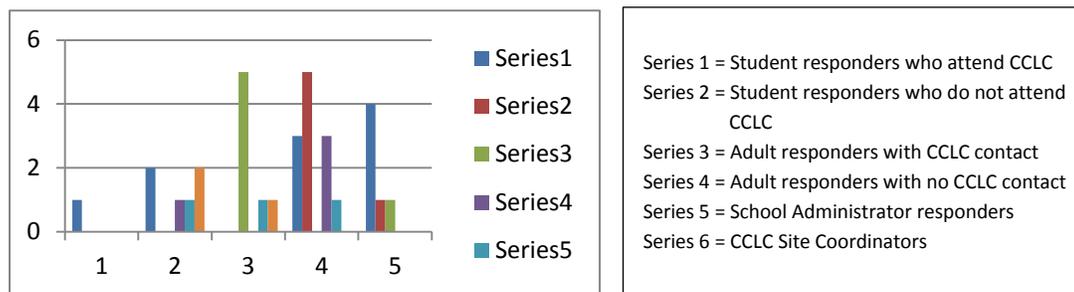


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Their responses are below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number. The bars in blue represent the responses from the school administrators. Those in red are CCLC site coordinators.



A composite of all interview responses about families' involvement in their children's education is shown below. The numbers along the bottom represent the statement number.



Series 1 = Student responders who attend CCLC
 Series 2 = Student responders who do not attend CCLC
 Series 3 = Adult responders with CCLC contact
 Series 4 = Adult responders with no CCLC contact
 Series 5 = School Administrator responders
 Series 6 = CCLC Site Coordinators

Section 3: Recommendations

Guidelines for Local Evaluations to Meet State Level Evaluation Requirements, a document developed by Dr. Ron Cravey and Ernest Sinclair, includes the idea that “local evaluations should provide information centers need to improve their services.” The following recommendations emerge as possibilities:

1. Recommendation: To restate objectives to include measurable statements.

Current objectives present worthy goals without stating desired measurable levels to determine the program's success.

2. Recommendation: To schedule the Search Institute Survey to update student data related to the 40 Developmental Assets.

More information needs to be gathered to determine whether or not Allamakee County CCLC programs are meeting the student need “to value themselves and be engaged and supported in their communities.” The Search Institute Survey will assess the positive developmental assets and the risk factors when assets are deficient.

3. Recommendation: To increase programming that involves parents and builds more engagement in their children's education as well as added strategies to help families learn skills to increase their communication skills, build relationships, and increase career options.

The involvement of community members, especially as leaders of CCLC clubs, is strong; but more evidence is needed that CCLC in both communities is working to involve parents and build the skills needed to fulfill the objective.